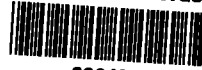




HOTEL
EMPLOYEES &
RESTAURANT
EMPLOYEES UNION, AFL-CIO

EPA Region 5 Records Ctr.



226495

I. 1
9/1/00

Lars Negstad, Sr. Research Analyst
Direct: 312-925-8024

September 1, 2000

Verneta Simon, On-scene coordinator
Superfund Division (SE-5J)
US EPA Region 5
77 W. Jackson Boulevard
Chicago, IL 60604-3590

Dear Ms. Simon:

Thank you for answering my questions regarding the HBE Corporation-owned parcel of land on East Illinois street, just south of the Lindsay Light II site.

I thought you might be interested in some of our materials regarding Adam's Mark. I know that it is not directly relevant to your work. However, I thought they might give you some insight into what type of company you are dealing with. I would be happy to get you more information if you would like.

I look forward to hearing from you soon regarding your progress in obtaining access to the site.

Sincerely,

Lars Negstad

The UWM Post August 23, 2000

Workers confront Firstar regarding bankruptcy law

Bryan G. Pfeifer
Post Editor

Milwaukee—A workers support committee and other community residents confronted Firstar Bank here Aug. 18 to demand that the \$76 billion corporation reverse its position on a new bankruptcy law that pays creditors before workers. The workers main goal was to present a letter to Jerry Grundhofer, President and CEO of Firstar outlining their grievances.

The workers committee is composed of former U.S. Leather and Steeltech employees.

U.S. Leather gave employees two days' notice in February that it was shutting down the Pfister & Vogel plant, 1531 N. Water St., and the A.L. Gebhardt plant, 2615 W. Greves St. The corporation then filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy. The law calls for 60 days' notice. The companies combined employed 525.

Workers from Pfister & Vogel/Gebhardt and Steeltech say that a law passed in 1998 and amended in 1999 has victimized them allowing banks and financial institutions to collect their money in bankruptcy proceedings before paying workers the wages and benefits due them. Before the law was passed by the Wisconsin Legislature the reverse was true—workers were paid before creditors if a corporation went bankrupt.

The workers contend that Firstar spent thousands of dollars and employed lobbyists to get the new bankruptcy law

passed so the corporation would be the first in line to receive profits.

Before entering the lobby of Firstar at 777 E. Wisconsin Ave. to deliver their letter to Grundhofer, the workers led a spirited rally in front of the bank before a multinational crowd of supporters, and fellow workers that numbered over 100. Supporters included

Milwaukee County Labor Council Secretary-Treasurer John Goldstein, William Johnson Jr., Milwaukee County Supervisor for the 13th District and members of the Progressive Student Network at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

"We want to make the message clear there has to be limits and the community will hold them accountable if they go past the limits," said Richard Oulahan, Executive Director of Esperanza Unida, Inc. one of the sponsors of the action.

The letter, written by the Workers Support Committee, and addressed to Grundhofer, asked him to "do two things:"

"Waive your right to first position in regard to workers in the cases of Pfister & Vogel/Gebhardt and Steeltech and let these workers get their fair wages and benefits before collecting your money."

"Realize that is was a mis-

take to lobby to get banks first position before workers wages and indicate that in a letter to the legislature urging them to reverse the current law and put workers wages first."

After the outside rally the workers and their supporters entered the lobby to present their letter to Grundhofer and were met by a phalanx of Milwaukee police officers, Firstar security guards and a Firstar lawyer who refused to receive it. In response to the letter the lawyer said, "That's it we're done talking about it. I'll have to ask you to leave now."

During the confrontation between the bank officials and workers' representatives, members of the crowd voiced their grievances. Sentiments included, "You're talking about people who can't put food on the table because of this law," and "What kind of business is this? Do you have kids?"

Amid whistles, boos, and denunciations of Firstar, the crowd dispersed chanting "Workers wages first, banks profits later!" and "No justice, no peace!"

The crowd vowed to continue the fight to have the present bankruptcy laws overturned.

"It's a human rights issue here. We as working people need to stand together," said Mindy Williams of the United Electrical Workers union. Williams is a former employee of Steeltech.

Workers also illuminated for those in attendance the personal tolls the layoffs have had.

"We want the world to know and also Firstar because it was one of the major creditors for Pfister & Vogel that lent them some money and then when they close out they came and got their money and left the

people on the streets and we want them to know who they hurt and it's our families," said Salvador R. De Leon at Friday's action. De Leon was the former Union Steward for Teamsters Local 200 at the Pfister & Vogel plant.

"This company saw these people work for them for so many years they put their lives in there and all of a sudden they decide to close and walk away and leave people on the streets without any kind of help. No health benefits. No vacations. ...Big corporations make millions of dollars. We don't make millions of dollars we just kind of make a living for our families," said De Leon.

According to the website www.firstarwatch.com, published by the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees International Union, Firstar doesn't have a good track record in communities of color.

The Union contends that "Firstar Bank is providing a \$23 million loan to construct a new Adams Mark Hotel in Chicago but Adams Mark has been repeatedly sued for racial and sexual discrimination. While Firstar apparently doesn't have a problem lending to a company accused of discrimination, it has a real problem when it comes to lending to working families and minorities in Chicago."

The UWM Post contacted Firstar's press spokesperson for a reply to the workers' concerns. The corporation had no comment regarding any of the above issues.

Why is FIRSTAR Bringing Adam's Mark to Chicago?

Firstar is providing a \$23 million loan to Adam's Mark, a company that would like to build a hotel in Chicago. But *Adams Mark* has been repeatedly sued, including a high-profile case brought by the U. S. Department of Justice alleging a pattern of racial discrimination.

➔ *Is this the type of company we want in our community?*

★ **"Florida Attorney General Bob Butterworth said the Adam's Mark actions in his state were 'morally reprehensible' and 'conjured up the hateful images of Jim Crow and apartheid.'"** (*St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, 12-17-99)

★ **"A federal jury awarded a Memphis woman more than \$455,000 in a sexual harassment suit against HBE Corp., owner of the Adam's Mark Hotel."** (*Commercial Appeal*, 10-22-98)

★ **In Denver, Adam's Mark's relationship with labor has been described as "a thorn in the city's Downtown redevelopment efforts."** (*Denver Post*, 4-4-98)

Adam's Mark has announced plans to develop a new 1,600-room hotel in downtown Chicago. Mercantile Bank, which recently merged with Firstar Corporation, has provided Adam's Mark with a two-year \$23 million loan on the Chicago parcel.



**Call FIRSTAR at 314-505-8123 and tell them
Adam's Mark is not welcome in our community !**

Is Firststar a FAIR Lender?

Firststar Bank is providing a \$23 million loan to construct a new Adams Mark Hotel in Chicago, but Adams Mark has been repeatedly sued for racial and sexual discrimination. While Firststar apparently doesn't have a problem lending to a company accused of discrimination, it has a real problem when it comes to lending to working families and minorities in Chicago:

- ✪ In 1998, only 2% of Firststar Home Mortgage Corp's loans went to **African-American borrowers**, and only 3% of all home purchase loans by Firststar Home Mortgage were originated to Hispanic borrowers in the Chicago metropolitan area.* Other financial institutions in Chicago averaged more than three times Firststar's lending rate to African-American and Hispanic borrowers.
- ✪ Only 1% of Firststar's home purchase loans were made in **predominantly minority areas of the city**, while 96% of Firststar's home purchase loans were in white areas.
- ✪ Firststar Home Mortgage Corp. originated only 6% of its home purchase loans in **low- and moderate-income areas of the city**. That's less than half the rate of other lenders in Chicago.



Call FIRSTAR at 314-505-8123 and tell them we want a bank that's fair to everyone in the community.

Hotel Employees & Restaurant Employees Union Local 1, AFL-CIO
55 W. Van Buren, Chicago IL 60605 • 312-663-4373

* 1998 Home Mortgage Disclosure Act data filed by Firststar Home Mortgage with the Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council. Data covers lending in the Chicago MSA.

FIRSTAR CUSTOMER PROFILE

**HOW DOES FIRSTAR DECIDE WHO TO LEND MONEY TO?
CONSIDER FIRSTAR'S RECORD...**

IN DOWNTOWN CHICAGO

➤ **FIRSTAR HAS LENT ADAM'S MARK \$23 MILLION TO BUILD A 1,600 ROOM HOTEL IN DOWNTOWN CHICAGO.**

➤ **In addition to a high-profile case brought by the US Department of Justice alleging a pattern of racial discrimination at Adam's Mark, the hotel company has been sued for discrimination at least *half a dozen times* in the last decade.**

➤ **"Janet Reno in announcing the suit, said the Adam's Mark hotel in Daytona Beach had treated blacks in a 'degrading, dehumanizing and despicable' way."**

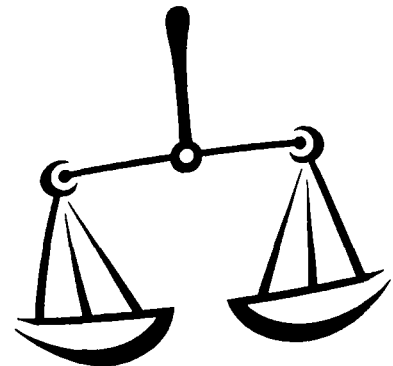
(The Dallas Morning News, 12/17/99)

IN CHICAGO NEIGHBORHOODS

⊗ **Firstar Home Mortgage Corp. originated only 6% of its home purchase loans in low- and moderate-income areas of the city in 1998. That's less than half the rate of other lenders in Chicago.**

⊗ **In 1998, only 2% of Firstar Home Mortgage Corp's loans went to African-American borrowers, and only 3% of all home purchase loans by Firstar Home Mortgage were originated to Hispanic borrowers in the Chicago metropolitan area.* Other financial institutions in Chicago averaged more than three times Firstar's lending rate to African-American and Hispanic borrowers.**

***CALL FIRSTAR AT 314-505-8123
AND TELL THEM WE WANT A BANK
THAT IS FAIR TO EVERYONE IN
OUR COMMUNITY!***



Hotel Employees & Restaurant Employees Union Local 1, AFL-CIO
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* 1998 Home Mortgage Disclosure Act data filed by Firstar Home Mortgage with the Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council. Data covers lending in the Chicago MSA.

Newsfrom Hotel & Motel Mgmt. Magazine

8-14-00

Not so fast

A Chicago hotel-workers' union tries to stop Adam's Mark from building a downtown hotel

By John P. Walshu

H&MM Senior Editor

Chicago-Adam's Mark Hotels & Resorts wants to build the third largest hotel in Chicago, the largest new hotel in the city in seven years—a \$350-million, 1,600-room hotel located downtown.

But wait.

If the Hotel Employees & Restaurant Employees Union, Local 1, AFL-CIO has anything to do with it, the hotel won't be built until some union issues are resolved.

Lars Negstad, research analyst for the union, said the union is concerned because it believes that Adam's Mark will not allow workers to unionize.

"They are not union anywhere and won't be [unionized in Chicago]," he said.

However, Fred S. Kummer III, vice president of Adam's Mark Hotels & Resorts, said that is not the case.

"Employees are given opportunities at the correct time," he said. "If they want representation, they will be able to vote. If our employees want to organize, there are laws that give them a clear availability to take that step."

Kummer confirmed that Adam's Mark has no unions at its 23 existing properties, but said it is not the only hotel company that isn't union. He cited Marriott International as another company that isn't union.

While declining to elaborate on specifics, Kummer said Adam's Mark's compensation package puts employees in a position so they don't have to unionize.

"We offer a package that is more than competitive than what an outside organization offers," he said.

Negstad sees a bigger picture here.

"The deal with being in a union for workers is more than just an hourly wage," he said. "It has to do with medical and non-economic benefits, such as favoritism and vacation time. It gives them a voice on the job and the ability to have protection from managers so they won't be fired at will. Seniority rights are

also important with workers."

Kummer said those issues are not taken lightly at Adam's Mark.

"It's consistently been shown that [Adam's Mark employees] don't need an outside organization to get what they already have," Kummer said.

According to Negstad, the union isn't the only entity on its side of the issue.

"We're not alone in this," he said. "Existing hotels have the same view. [Adam's Mark is] viewed as the lone wolf in the hotel industry. They keep to themselves and don't really work with the industry."

Kummer disputed that notion.

"We are far from a lone wolf in the industry," he said. "It would be boring in the industry if everybody was the same. The only way we are a lone wolf is that we own and manage all of our hotels. We do not franchise or subcontract out. We do not have the size or the clout to set majors trends."

Adam's Mark Hotels & Resorts

Parent company: HBE Corp.

Headquarters: St Louis

Web Site:
www.adamstar.com

**Number of
Properties:** 23

Number of Rooms:
12,958

Operations: 13 States

Type of company:
Owning

**Year company was
established:** 1973

Kummer said he believes there is no problem with Adam's Mark, which has about 12,958 guest-rooms in its system.

"[The union] was trying to bring attention to themselves," he said. "This has nothing to do with any problems. We listen to our management team and address needs as they come up. We have a relationship with them that is mutually beneficial to all."

The union, which represents workers who maintain about 65 percent of the hotel rooms in downtown Chicago, sent a letter to Adam's Mark in February asking the hotel company to join it in a discussion for workers to have the right to organize. Adam's Mark declined to join the union for discussion.

"They refuse to talk with us about a labor agreement," Negstad said. "Historically, this company has been

building in the South and the West in cities where there aren't strong unions. Chicago is a strong union city."

"No one is going to force us to make that choice for our workers," Kummer said. "Forty-five percent of hotel workers in Chicago choose not to be represented. We'll give [our] employees that same choice."

"He's going to fight the union," Negstad said of Fred S. Kummer, chair and c.e.o of Adam's Mark Hotels & Resorts, president of its parent company HBE Corp. and Fred S. Kummer III's father.

Adam's Mark has purchased the land on which to build the hotel but has yet to break ground and has several steps to climb before doing so. Adam's Mark still needs final clearance from the city's Department of Planning and Development to begin construction.

"We're moving quickly through the process," Kummer said. "But when you have a project of this size, there is going to be some hoopla. It will be a big deal when it's done."

Financially, the company received a \$23-million loan from Firststar Corp. to finance the project.

According to Negstad, the union is distributing leaflets at Firststar bank branches in the Chicago area that highlight race problems that recently have been associated with Adam's Mark.

About three months ago, Adam's Mark agreed to an \$8-million settlement stemming from an April 1999 incident in which black guests, who were attending a college-reunion weekend at a Daytona Beach, Fla., hotel, were asked to wear wristbands to distinguish hotel guests from other visitors.

"That was an unfortunate predicament that we were placed in," Kummer said. "Our numbers show that we're a fair and just organization. For the health and well-being of our company, we made a settlement. We continue to assert that 60.8 percent of our staff is minority, and 27 percent of our management staff is minority. Instead, we are made out to be discriminatory, but we foster and enhance minority opportunities and growth."

In addition to these difficulties, the land just north of the Chicago property that Adam's Mark purchased had high levels of radioactive thorium in it. The thorium was used at a manufacturing plant on the site that made lantern mantles in the 1920s and '30s. It is toxic once exposed to air and can raise the risk of cancer if breathed or by skin exposure, according to the Environmental Protection Agency.

The EPA is conducting tests and preventing exposure to the metallic element in addition to disposing of it properly. The EPA said there is more radioactive thorium in the land Adam's Mark purchased. It will continue to do more testing on this land as well. At press time, it is not known when the testing will be completed.

"We abide by all laws and regulations," Kummer said.

jwalsh@advanstar.com

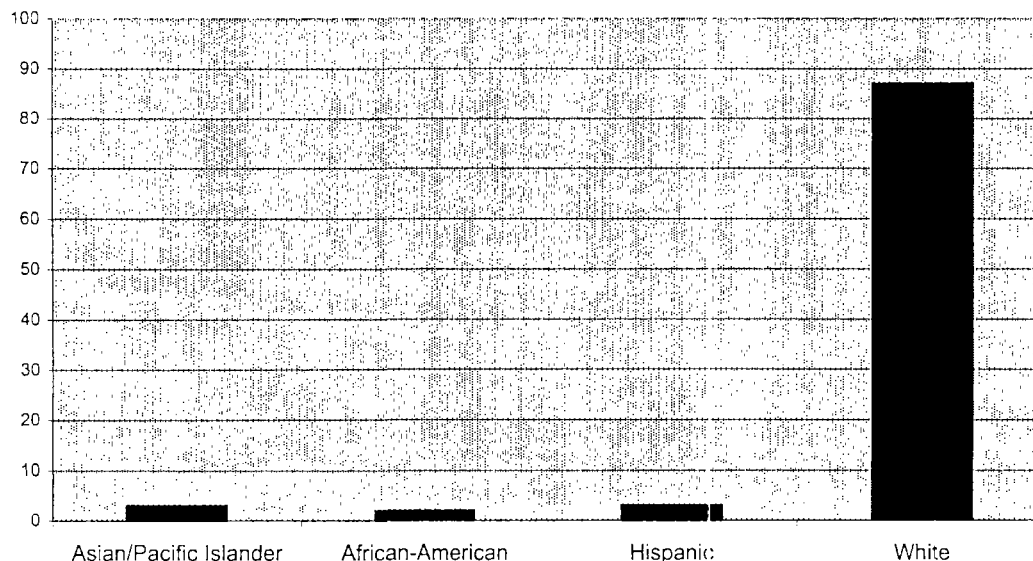
H&MM

FIRSTAR FACTS: FAIR LENDING

FIRSTAR FALLS BELOW THE INDUSTRY STANDARD IN LENDING TO AFRICAN AMERICAN AND HISPANIC BORROWERS

- ▶ In 1998, only 2.3% of Firststar's¹ home purchase loans went to African-Americans, and only 3.3% were originated to Hispanic borrowers. Of Firststar's refinancing loans, only 1.4% went to African-Americans and 2.3% went to Hispanic borrowers. The industry average in the Chicago area was more than three times Firststar's lending rate to African-American and Hispanic borrowers.
- ▶ Only 10.2% of Firststar's home purchase loans went to non-whites. That's less than half the industry standard of 23.7%.
- ▶ Only 1.0% of Firststar's home purchase and refinance loans were made in neighborhoods of Chicago with at least an 80% minority population. The industry average is over *five times* that rate (5.3%) for home purchases and almost *eight times* that rate (7.7%) for refinancing.
- ▶ Firststar made more home purchase loans in areas having less than 10% minority population than all other areas combined. In fact, over 60% of Firststar's home purchase loans were made in these predominantly white neighborhoods.

Percentage of Firststar Home Purchase Loans by Race

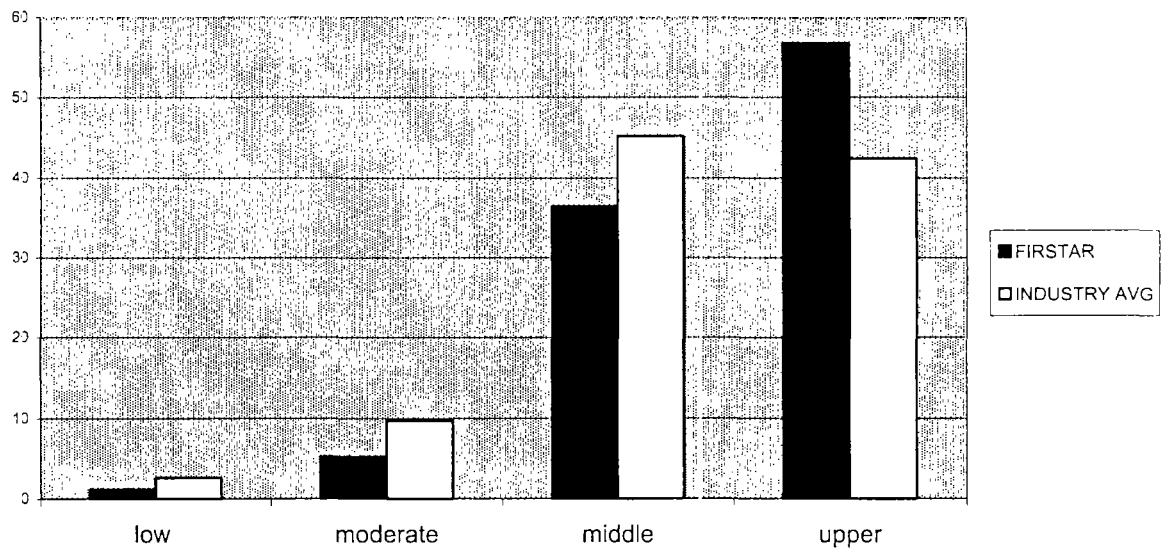


¹ All data refers to loans made by Firststar Home Mortgage Corp.

FIRSTAR UNDERSERVES LOW-INCOME COMMUNITIES

- ▶ Only 3% of Firstar's home purchase loans went to low-income borrowers, while over half of their home purchase loans went to those with the highest level of income. In fact, Firstar made more home purchase loans to upper-income customers than all other customers combined.*
- ▶ Firstar made only 3% of their refinancing loans to low-income customers. That's half the rate of the industry average in the Chicago area.
- ▶ Firstar originated only 1.2% of its home purchase loans for properties in low-income areas of metropolitan Chicago, which is less than half the rate of the industry standard.
- ▶ Firstar made more home purchase and refinancing loans for properties in upper-income neighborhoods (56.8% and 59%, respectively) than in middle-, moderate-, and low-income neighborhoods combined.

Percentage of Home Purchase Loans by Income of Neighborhood: Firstar v. Industry Average



* The low-income category consists of census tracts where the median family income is less than 50% of the MSA median family income, based on the 1990 census. Moderate-income is at least 50% and less than 80%, middle-income is at least 80% and less than 120%, and upper-income is 120% or more of the median family income.

Source: 1998 Home Mortgage Disclosure Act data filed by Firstar Home Mortgage Corp with the Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council. Data covers lending in the Chicago MSA.

REAL ESTATE REVIEW

Union takes aim at planned Adam's Mark

By STEVE DANIELS

The union that represents most of Chicago's downtown hotel workers is mounting a campaign to head off development of what would be the largest new hotel in the city in seven years.

In what it says is an unprecedented action in Chicago, the Hotel and Restaurant Employees union is taking aim at Adam's Mark, a 1,600-room hotel planned for a site between Illinois and North Water streets just east of Columbus Drive.

The campaign is part of a strategy the union has launched nationally to aggressively oppose hotels proposed by companies that resist union organizing. Adam's Mark Hotels, a unit of St. Louis-based HBE Corp., has kept unions out of its properties.

The company has further angered the union by ignoring a request to allow an expedited organizing process at the Chicago hotel. Adam's Mark still needs final clearance from the city's Department of Planning and Development to begin construction. But rather than try to stop the project at City Hall, the union is focusing its attention on the hotel's current and potential lenders.

"I think the lending climate for hotels is such that we're going to be the straw that breaks the camel's back," says Lars Negstad, research analyst for the union, who is spearheading the effort to stop Adam's Mark. "It's late in the development cycle in Chicago for hotels."

Indeed, hotel occupancy rates have been declining here for nearly two years, leading to some

industry concern that new rooms will saturate the market.

Trying to take advantage of that uncertainty, the union is distributing leaflets at Firststar Corp. branches in town that highlight recent accusations of racial discrimination made against Adam's Mark Hotels.

Nearly three months ago, Adam's Mark agreed to an \$8-million settlement stemming from an April 1999 incident in which African-American guests at a Daytona Beach, Fla., hotel who were attending a college-reunion weekend were asked to wear wrist bands in order to distinguish hotel guests from other visitors.

"It was something the Department of Justice got involved in," says Fred Kummer, president and chief executive of Adam's Mark parent HBE Corp. "We think we got involved in the middle of something very, very complex, and I won't comment further than that."

Milwaukee-based Firststar, which last year acquired St. Louis-based Mercantile Bancorporation Inc., is one of the hotel's lenders. The union also has sent a letter to a bank executive raising questions about oversupply of hotel rooms in Chicago and about environmental contamination at nearby sites.

"Mercantile is a bank we have done a lot of business with for

many, many years," Mr. Kummer says. "I think the unions have to do what they think is appropriate." He acknowledged that HBE has not lined up the bank financing it will need to complete the \$300-million Chicago hotel.

And the union controversy won't help HBE's cause with prospective lenders.

"Anytime you've got something going with a project where there is a wrench in the works, the lending community is not going to like it as much. They like things clean and neat," says Chicago-based Scott K. Steilen,

manager of the hotel consulting practice at accounting/consulting firm Ernst & Young LLP.

In other markets, Adam's Mark has resisted union attempts to organize, says Mr. Negstad. The union has no reason to believe the situation would be different in Chicago, though HBE executives have yet to respond to union entreaties.

"Our experience with non-union hotel companies like Adam's Mark is they fight union organizing tooth and nail," he says, conceding that the company is within its rights to do so.

Unlike other hotels that stand aside while unions proselytize workers, Adam's Mark actively participates in organizing campaigns, presenting employees with the company's views on the impact of unionization.

Mr. Kummer says the firm is likely to take the same approach in Chicago, but hasn't responded to the union's letter requesting permission to mount an expedited organizing campaign because the hotel isn't built and has no employees to organize.

The union represents workers who clean and maintain about

65% of the hotel rooms in downtown Chicago, including those of most of the city's largest hotels, such as Hilton Chicago and Hyatt Regency Chicago, according to the union.

One notable exception is Chicago Marriott Downtown on Michigan Avenue. Like Adam's Mark, Bethesda, Md.-based Marriott International Inc. typically resists organizing efforts, Mr. Negstad says.

As more hotel chains attempt to break into Chicago, more aggressive union campaigns can be expected, the union analyst says.

"As some of the smaller, older downtown hotels close down and new ones come up, we have to stay on top of them, or we'll be left in the dust."

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

June 1, 2000

Union to Oppose Construction of Chicago Hotel

By Charlene Prost

A proposal by Adam's Mark Hotels & Resorts to build a 1,600-room hotel in downtown Chicago has stirred some opposition from Hotel Employees & Restaurant Employees Union Local 1, AFL-CIO.

Lars Negstad, a spokesman for the Chicago local, said it has two main concerns: lawsuits filed against the Adam's Mark alleging racial and gender discrimination, and the refusal of Adam's Mark's owners in St. Louis to allow efforts to unionize hotel workers. "We think this city is better off without an Adam's Mark," he said.

Negstad said that as part of its crusade against the hotel, the union also plans to circulate leaflets in Chicago criticizing Firststar Corp.'s record as a fair lender. The reason, he said, is that Mercantile Bank in St. Louis, now part of Firststar, lent Adam's Mark about \$23 million to acquire property for the hotel.

Fred S. Kummer, president and chief executive of Adam's Mark and its parent company, HBE Corp., said the companies would try to resolve any issues being raised "at the appropriate time and in the appropriate way."

"Adam's Mark, with its 65 percent minority work force, has been an exceptional employer working with all parties in our hotel communities. Chicago will be no exception," he said.

American Banker
Union Web Site Takes Potshots at Firststar
Friday, July 21, 2000

By Matt Ackermann

Angered by a loan to a hotel builder that used nonunion workers, a national union launched an Internet assault Wednesday on Firststar Corp.

The attack, by the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees International Union, included potshots at Firmco, Firststar's fund and investment unit, which handles the union's \$2 billion of pension assets.

The Milwaukee banking company has a reputation on Wall Street for deft handling of mergers and taking advantage of cross-selling opportunities among its various businesses. But the blast from www.firststarwatch.com, the union's new Web site, illustrates that problems can spread among various units just as quickly as profits.

The central claim is that a \$23 million loan to Adams Mark of St. Louis to develop a 1,600-room hotel in Chicago was "economically and morally reprehensible." And the site also asserts that the banking company has a history of unfair lending practices.

"We are trying to be a watchdog and provide customers with the full story on this bank," said Chris Bohner, a senior research director for the union. "We looked at this bank and realized that with all of their mergers and expansion, no one was watching what they were doing."

To back up the claim of unfair lending, the site provides a link to a Home Mortgage Disclosure Act site through which users can look up banks' lending history in various locations. The HMDA site, however, provides no specific evidence of problems at Firststar, which has passed Community Reinvestment Act scrutiny to gain approval for numerous mergers.

Firststar spokesman Steve Dale said the complaints were actually aimed at Adams Mark. "This is an issue that involves the union and a customer of the bank, and the union is attempting to place the bank in the middle as a pressure tactic." He declined to comment further.

The dispute between Firststar and the union began in April, when the banking company, through its Chicago subsidiary Mercantile Bank, provided a two-year loan to Adams Mark to build a new hotel.

Mr. Bohner said the union, aware of the hotel company's reputation for not hiring union employees, approached Firststar.

"We went to them and asked them for help. We wanted to educate them about what they were getting themselves into and the economics regarding the loan," he said. "We told

them about our problem with Adams Mark, and we asked them to mediate the situation, and they politely responded that this was not an issue that they were concerned with." When Firstar refused to step in, the union began its own investigation into Adams Mark, Mr. Bohner said. The probe uncovered settlements the hotel company made with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the Justice Department after suits alleging racial discrimination had been filed, he said.

This raised concerns that there might be bigger problems at Firstar, Mr. Bohner said. "We started digging and realized that there were a lot of problems at Firstar in the mutual fund and asset management side. We started talking to people and realized that there are a lot of problems with customer service," he said. "As banks get larger and larger, there is a lot of things that seem to fall by the wayside."

Mr. Bohner said the union's site will ensure that Firstar manages the union's assets wisely.

The site includes a list of five Firstar mutual funds - International Equity, Special Growth, Growth, Stellar Capital Appreciation, and Stellar Strategic Income - that it says have "been real dogs because of poor performance and/or high fees."

But Lori Appelbaum, an analyst with Goldman Sachs Group, said the Web site does not tell the full story of Firstar's fund performance.

The data used to trash the funds are out of date, she said. Last year "was a tough year, but 2000 has been great."

Firstar Funds manages 36 mutual funds. Its second-quarter assets under management rose 2.6% from a year earlier, to \$17 billion.

Mr. Bohner said that the union is not advocating moving its pension funds out of Firstar's program. "Each plan will determine whether or not it should pull their funds from Firstar."

Many large banks, including Chase Manhattan, Wells Fargo, and Key Corp., have been targeted by Web sites whose sole purpose is to criticize them, but this is the first such site set up by a labor union, Ms. Appelbaum said.

"There are layoffs, there are lawsuits, and there are loans that are turned down," she said. "Banks turn away bad credit and make loans all the time. These are things that banks deal with. The difference here is the source."

The site will remain up and is intended to be a public service, Mr. Bohner said. "Everyone is entitled to their point of view," he said. "We have a point of view, and Firstar has a point of view. With the Web site, people now have the opportunity to hear an opinion that, prior to this, they may not have known existed."